

around Spain again, for the first time in 30 years.

**President Aznar.** You're invited; you know that. I hope to see you there.

*[At this point, President Aznar continued his remarks in Spanish, and a translation was not provided.]*

#### NATO

**Q.** Mr. President, what do you expect from Spain with the new role that NATO has to play?

**President Clinton.** Well, first of all, I expect an important leadership role. We want Spain integrated fully into the NATO command structure. We're very fortunate in having a Secretary-General of NATO from Spain. And having Madrid be the site of this historic summit when we will vote for the first time to take in new members and hopefully be in a position to celebrate a new arrangement with Russia—we're working on that now; we hope we can achieve that—I think symbolizes the role that Spain will play in the years ahead in NATO.

Also, we look to the Spanish to lead in NATO, to be willing to do what has to be done, to have a say in situations which may not be immediately popular but which are profoundly important.

Again, let me say, I'm very grateful to the support we've received in Bosnia, to the work we're doing in Guatemala. The influence that Spain has in Latin America is something that's especially important to the United States because we seek to integrate ourselves more closely into Latin America and in partnership with Spain. So we're very hopeful there.

**Q.** *[Inaudible]*—petition for—taking a bigger role, more important role in the NATO?

**President Clinton.** Well, the details of all that have to be worked out by the command structure. But we want Spain integrated into the structure, yes.

#### The President's Visit to Spain

**Q.** *[Inaudible]*—will you come next?

**President Clinton.** I don't know. Since I've been President, I've only been really to Madrid and for brief periods. But 30 years

ago—28 years ago this month, I had a vacation as a very young man in Spain. And I've always wanted to go back, and I've always wanted to have a chance to see it with Hillary. My daughter was able to come to Spain for an extended period a couple of years ago. So we're hoping that we can take just a couple of days off before the summit to see some more things in Spain. I'll follow the President's lead; I won't sketch out my itinerary here because I don't really have one. *[Laughter]*

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:45 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to Minister of Foreign Affairs Qian Qichen of China; and Javier Solana, Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

#### Statement on Economic Expansion and Job Creation

April 30, 1997

Today, we have received positive news about the Nation's economy—more strong growth with moderate inflation. In the first quarter of this year, the economy grew 5.6 percent on an annualized basis—the highest in a decade. That means more jobs and better wages for American workers and stronger profits for businesses—both large and small. Our sound fiscal policies, together with the hard work of the American people, have sparked a remarkable period of economic expansion and job creation. It is imperative that we pass a bipartisan balanced budget agreement to continue this solid economic progress.

Just more than 4 years ago, we inherited a deficit that was nearly \$300 billion, and we have cut it by 63 percent already. While it is still too early to know for certain, our economic policies and this year's healthy growth may help us cut the deficit for the 5th straight year—for the first time in 50 years. Now, it's time to finish the job and balance the budget.

**Statement on the Senate Resolution  
Establishing National Erase the Hate  
and Eliminate Racism Day**

*April 30, 1997*

I applaud the leadership of Senator Baucus, along with Senator Burns and all Members of the United States Senate who have joined together to designate today as a national day to erase the hate and eliminate racism. America is the world's most diverse democracy and the world looks to us for leadership in building on that diversity and showing that it is our greatest strength. Today's resolution shows that the Senate is determined to reach across party lines to help achieve that promise.

We must do all we can to fight bigotry and intolerance, in ugly words and awful violence, in burned churches and bombed buildings—including efforts such as today's resolution. The only way we can meet our challenges is by meeting them together—as one America—and giving all of our citizens, whatever their background, an opportunity to achieve their own greatness.

**Statement on Senate Confirmation of  
Alexis Herman as Secretary of Labor**

*April 30, 1997*

I want to thank the Senate for its strong show of support for Alexis Herman. There was never any question that she was highly qualified to be Secretary of Labor. She understands the needs of workers and understands the challenges they face as we approach the 21st century.

This is an important time for the Labor Department. The Department must reform and manage programs that will help prepare America's working men and women for the challenges of our changing economy. Alexis Herman is fully prepared to lead the Department in this effort. She will be an outstanding Secretary of Labor.

**Statement on the House of  
Representatives Passage of the  
"Adoption Promotion Act of 1997"**

*April 30, 1997*

I congratulate the House of Representatives on the passage of H.R. 867, the Adoption Promotion Act of 1997. This bipartisan legislation will further our efforts to give the children waiting in the foster care system what ever child in America deserves—loving parents and a healthy, stable home.

The First Lady and I have had a continuing commitment to uniting these waiting children with families to teach, guide, and care for them. In December, I directed the Department of Health and Human Services to come up with a strategy to simplify the adoption process and move more children more quickly from foster care into permanent homes. In response to this directive, HHS submitted Adoption 2002, a report which takes its name from one of its central goals—to double by the year 2002 the number of children adopted or permanently placed each year.

The Adoption Promotion Act of 1997 incorporates many of the recommendations made in the administration's report. I urge Congress to keep this important legislation moving forward.

**Statement on Signing the Assisted  
Suicide Funding Restriction Act of  
1997**

*April 30, 1997*

Today I am signing into law H.R. 1003, the "Assisted Suicide Funding Restriction Act of 1997," which reaffirms current Federal policy banning the use of Federal funds to pay for assisted suicide, euthanasia, or mercy killing.

This is appropriate legislation. Over the years, I have clearly expressed my personal opposition to assisted suicide, and I continue to believe that assisted suicide is wrong. While I have deep sympathy for those who suffer greatly from incurable illness, I believe